

Church Will Hold Meeting, Dinner

The 45th annual meeting and dinner of the First Unitarian church, Oakland, will be held in Wendte hall, Fourteenth and Castro streets, at 6:30 tonight.

Dr. Louis C. Cornish, president of the American Unitarian association, has been invited to give one of the addresses. Mrs. Thomas G. Rees of Boston, Mass., president of the general alliance of Unitarian Women, will speak. Other messages will be brought by Major Charles L. Tilden and Dr. Clarence Reed, the minister of the church.

Dr. Reed will report on the year's work just completed and announce plans for the new. He says the past twelve months were among the most successful in the history of the church.

TWO UNITARIAN HEADS ATTEND MEETING HERE

Dr. L. C. Cornish and Mrs. Thomas G. Kees of Boston Pay Tribute to Local Man

Dr. Louis C. Cornish, Boston, president of the American Unitarian association, and Mrs. Thomas G. Rees, Boston, president of the General Alliance of Unitarian Women, ranking Unitarian leaders in America, attended the forty-fifth annual meeting of the First Unitarian church last night.

Dr. Cornish paid tribute to the late Dr. Charles W. Wendte, founder and for many years pastor of First church, Oakland. Succeeded more than a decade ago by Dr. Clarence Reed, present pastor, Dr. Wendte gave his attention to expansion of Unitarianism internationally.

"Dr. Wendte's monument is in a large sense our International Unitarian society, with headquarters in Holland," said Dr. Cornish. "That society now numbers 22 nationalities and 20,000,000 persons."

TELLS OF WORK

Mrs. Rees told of the work of Unitarian women in various parts of America, citing instances of supreme courage in the face of economic disaster. Both leaders lauded the reports read concerning Oakland's First church.

Mrs. Charles W. Wendte and Dr. L. D. Lambert were elected honorary trustees. DeWitt Young was named trustee for one year, and Dr. Herbert R. Foster and Robert Robertson, trustees for three years.

Music was provided by the choir of the church, assisted by Miss Omo Grimwood, soprano soloist.

LARGEST GROWTH

Official reports indicate the church had its largest congregational growth during the past year. Financially, the church came through the year with several hundred dollars balance on the happy side of the ledger, and at last night's meeting, voted a budget larger than ever before.

The Rev. Bernard C. Ruggles, of the Universal church, gave the invocation; Noah Adams read the treasurer's report; Miss S. Louise Palmer gave the secretary's report; Miss G. Crocker reported on the Women's Alliance; Robert Robertson told of church school activities; Dr. Berkeley B. Blake, executive vice-president of Pacific Coast Unitarians, welcomed the distinguished guests; Major Charles L. Tilden, of Alameda, spoke on "Our Minister," and Dr. Reed closed the meeting with a statement of his aims as a minister and his hopes for greater usefulness of self and church for the future.

Grown Shown in Church's Report

TRIB D MAR 14 1934

Steady growth of the various activities of the church was reported at the 47th annual dinner of the First Unitarian Church in Wendte Hall last night.

Dr. Clarence Reed, minister, received congratulations on the completion of 15 years as pastor of the Oakland church.

Dr. Louis C. Cornish of Boston, Mass., president of the American Unitarian Association, spoke on "The Church and World Problems," indicating the progress of liberal thought in the world today, especially in Spain and Czechoslovakia. Dr. Aurelia Henry Reinhardt, president of Mills College, emphasized the importance of the church in the community. Major Charles L. Tilden spoke on "The Church and the Minister," and Dr. Reed closed the program with the theme, "Our Church."

Church Holds 48th Annual Meeting

The 48th annual meeting of the congregation of the First Unitarian Church was held in Wendte Hall of the church last night.

Two noted leaders of Unitarianism attended. They were: President Sydney B. Snow of Chicago, and Dr. Robert C. Dexter of Boston, Mass., secretary of the Department of Social Relations of the American Unitarian Association. Dr. Dexter spoke on "The Social Message of the Church." President Snow discussed the theme "The Education Function of a Free Church." Dr. Clarence Reed, the minister, spoke on "The Religious Message of a Free Church."

Treasurer's report indicated all bills paid and a small balance in the treasury. Trustees elected include: B. R. Breese, G. H. Russell, DeWitt T. Young and Miss Bertha Knox.

CHURCH HOLDS ANNUAL DINNER

TRIB D MAR 1 1 1937

Fifty years of Unitarianism in Oakland were reviewed last night in pictures and discourse at the 50th annual dinner and meeting of the First Unitarian Church.

Two hundred members attended the dinner. The business meeting indicated the church is in healthy condition, both in finances and in membership.

Dr. George E. Patterson, of Boston, Mass., administrative vice-president of the American Unitarian Association, spoke on the subject "Our Church and Our Work."

Dr. Clarence Reed, minister, displayed stereoptican slides showing scenes at the building of the church and pictures of well-known figures in the early-day activities of the congregation and concluding with photographs of present-day leaders. Included in the list were pictures of Dr. Charles W. Wendte, first minister and founder of the church; Francis Cutting, Judge and Mrs. Oscar L. Shafter, Charles H. Redington, James T. Rattray, Noah Adams, M. S. Gould, and Major Charles L. Tilden.

The closing feature was the representation of dedication of the church in 1891. Taking part were Charles E. Hahn, Peter Samson, Mrs. G. H. Russell and the choir.

New trustees named were: Thomas Lindsay, Henry T. McKellor and H. J. Miller. Honorary trustees are Major Charles L. Tilden and Dr. L. D. Lambert.

CHURCH FETES GOLDEN JUBILEE OVER WEEK-END

TRIB D FEB 15 1937

First Unitarian Founded in
Oakland in 1887 With
129 Members on Rolls

The Golden Jubilee of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland furnished a highlight in the church news of the week-end.

One hundred twenty-nine persons signed the membership roll during 1887, and six of them are living. They are Mrs. A. C. Murray, Miss Marion Brobley, Miss L. C. Janssen, Miss Bertha S. Shafter, Miss Mary Pullman and Miss Metta Curtis. The Bible on the pulpit desk belonged to Dr. Laurentine Hamilton, the founder of the Independent Church of Oakland. He read from it on that Easter Sunday, 1882, when he died in the pulpit.

Among the ministers of the church have been Dr. Charles W. Wendte, Rev. Theodore Williams, Rev. J. T. Sunderland, Rev. B. Fay Mills and Rev. William Day Simonds. Dr. Clarence Reed has been the minister since 1919.

Dr. Reed gave a short summary of the history of the church at the service yesterday morning and then spoke on the subject, "What Use is a Liberal Church Today?"

The subject of the discussion at the evening service was "The Mission of the Church Today." President Aurelia Henry Reinhardt spoke of "Worship," Rabbi Rudolph I. Coffee on "Social Service," and Dr. C. S. S. Dutton on "An Adventurous Church."

VALUE OF BROTHERHOOD

Among the questions discussed by Dr. Frank Linder at First Methodist last evening was, "What is the value of this Brotherhood Day planned by Oakland churches for next Sunday, when ministers will exchange pulpits?"

"The main value will be to those on the fringes of the church and those out of touch with the present church program who may not know what a new spirit of unity and a common objective now unites all major religious bodies in the United States."

"The First Great Commandment" was Dr. Reidenbach's subject at First Congregational. He said in part: "The call of religion is to put God first. There can be no compromise. We must love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind. We can not put anything in the world ahead of God. Seek first the kingdom of God, and all other needful things will be added unto you. The world today has forgotten some of its A. B. C.'s in religion and morality, and it is time that we got back to them."

INTEGRITY IS TOPIC

Speaking on "Integrity," the Rev. Walters at Christ Church, Alameda, said in part:

"The Christian life, as Jesus lived it, is founded upon a simple dependence upon God, an acceptance of the offer of salvation for our better selves which Christ brings to us. As he lived it, this life is one which stands on guard against ways and practices which are not at one with the character of Christ. Christian integrity derives its unity from the growing knowledge of what Jesus would do in the many situations which make up our private and public lives."

Speaking on the subject, "Man Can Walk and Talk With God," at Verity Temple, Dr. H. J. Kleefisch said in part: "God is our true self and when man knows that and he talks and walks with that true self, he is in fact walking and talking with God. In this Lenten season we need to fast from the things which disturb the soul rather than the physical food. Food may be good or bad for our stomach, but fear and worry are worse, so start the fast by quitting worry and refusing to fret and be disturbed."

NEW OAKLAND PASTOR EXPRESSES VIEWS

TRIB D APR 5 - 1945

Ex-newspaperman, ex-chemical engineer, the Rev. Arnold Crompton has what — in some church circles — might be called liberal Christian views.

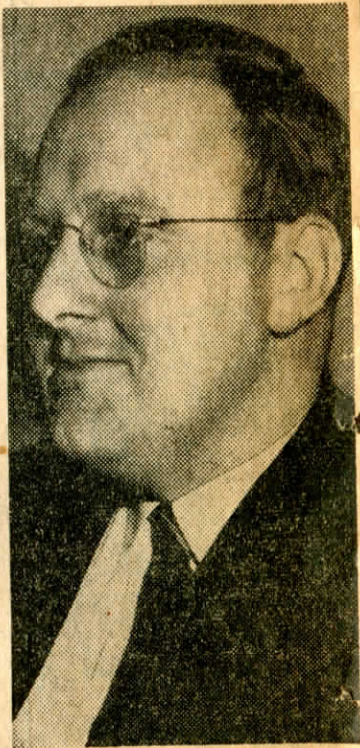
He promises plain talking and honesty. New pastor of the First Unitarian Church at 14th and Castro Streets, he has definite ideas on the establishment of peacetime military conscription, for instance—he's for it. He believes that religion must be brought up to—and kept with—the times, that churches must forget their denominational differences and work together as a social, cultural, community group, that now is the time for churches to give something to a world that needs it.

'GAMBLER'S CHANCE'

In return, the people can give their church and their preachers a "gambler's chance." They can shop around until they find the church they want, in the opinion of the Rev. Crompton, and they can find that religion actually is a happy experience.

"Most people are afraid of religion, because it is painful. And yet they are searching for a philosophy of life, for something stable. They are tired of humdrum existence, of the various escapes. The answer can be found in religion."

The Rev. Crompton, who left the First Unitarian Church in Erie, Pa., and the job of book reviewer on the Erie Dispatch-Herald to accept the local pastorate, declares that the fault with religion, the reason it is not more popular, lies with the churches.



Rev. Arnold Crompton

"Too many of them think more of raising a budget than of doing a job of religion.

"Scrapping has to be ruled out. Churches do not have to relinquish

their denominational theology, but they can work together as a group. They should be the leaders. Too often, they don't even follow.

NEED: GREAT PREACHING

"The great need actually is for great preaching."

Vitally interested in "current events," the Rev. Crompton devotes many of his sermons to questions in the news and does not hesitate to tackle even such "hot potatoes" as conscription.

Along with his "modern" views on religion, the Rev. Crompton has plans of modernizing his church, built in 1888.

"Church buildings are too dull and drab—too often they are dismal places," he said. "They should fit the needs of today."

Before entering the ministry, Crompton studied chemical engineering at Case School of Applied Science in Cleveland and attended Western Reserve University and University of Chicago.

"Then I just kind of shifted from one department to another and attended Meadville Theological School."

The Rev. Crompton, who preached his first sermon at his new church Easter Sunday, will be installed formally as pastor on Sunday night, April 22. Participating will be the Rev. Dan Huntington Fenn of Boston, chairman of the department of ministry of the American Unitarian Association; Dr. Horace Westwood of Berkeley, regional vice-president of the association, and Prof. George H. Williams, acting dean of Starr King Theological School.

First Unitarian Church Fetes Sixtieth Year

TRIB D FEB 13 1947

Sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland will be celebrated with a special service tomorrow evening at 8 o'clock. Conducting the service will be Dr. Caleb S. S. Dutton, minister of the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco, while the anniversary sermon will be preached by Dr. Arnold Crompton, since 1945 minister of the Oakland church.

Dr. Edward W. Ohrenstein, dean of the Starr King School for the Ministry, will be marshal of the processional, and Dr. J. Raymond Cope, minister of the First Unitarian Church of Berkeley will introduce distinguished guests and read messages of greeting.

Preceding the service, Frederick Freeman will play an organ recital at 7:30 p.m., and Marian Stiltz Calder will be the soloist for the service. Miss Alice G. Danforth and the Women's Alliance of the church have charge of the reception to be held in Wendt Hall at the conclusion of the service.

The Oakland church was organized under the leadership of Dr. Charles W. Wendt on February 14, 1887, with early lay leaders including Judge Charles N. Fox, Governor George C. Perkins, and Col. John P. Irish. Cornerstone of the present Romanesque structure was laid in August, 1890, and in the building are two stained glass win-

dows, memorials to Judge Oscar Shafter, which have attracted National attention through the years. Granite pillars in the chancel are memorials to Thomas Starr King, a gift from his widow.

Church Anniversary

TRIBUNE MAR 16 1947

Oakland's First Unitarian Church last month celebrated its 60th anniversary and many were the greetings received from near at hand and far afield. A bit of the church's history, as compiled for publication on the anniversary program tells a story with which many oldtimers may be more or less familiar. It reads: "In 1869, after an ecclesiastical trial for heresy, the Rev. Laurentine Hamilton, beloved pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Oakland, was excommunicated. The friends of liberty in religion resolved that so able a preacher should be heard, and to this end organized an 'Independent Presbyterian Church,' later leaving out the term 'Presbyterian.' For 13 years Mr. Hamilton ministered to this society. Then, on Easter Sunday, 1882, in the midst of his sermon, death struck him. Without a successor his equal, the church came to an end. But the hope for a liberal religious society still lived. When the Rev. Charles W. Wendte, secretary of the American Unitarian Association for the Pacific Coast, settled in Oakland during the fall of 1886, he found that the time had come for the establishment of a permanent liberal church. To the first service, held on October 3rd, at Odd Fellows Hall, came 150 people. By the following January formal organization proceedings were underway and on February 14th, 1887, the First Unitarian Church of Oakland came into being. Three years later plans for a church edifice were completed. At the site chosen, the southeast corner of 14th and Castro Streets, on August 16th, 1890, the cornerstone of the 'unique Romanesque' structure was laid by the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California. Time has brought changes, but in its essential design the building is as its founders planned and made it. In 1904 the Pacific Unitarian School for the Ministry (later renamed for the preacher-patriot, Thomas Starr King) was organized in what is now the minister's study."

First Unitarian Church To Observe Anniversary

TR 5C FEB 17 1952

The celebration of the 65th anniversary of the founding of the First Unitarian Church will be climaxed by a benefit dinner in Wendte Hall Friday evening at 6:30 p.m.

The price of the dinner is \$5, according to Garfield H. Russell, general chairman of the anniversary celebration.

Entertainment will be provided by the Faucit Players.

The proceeds from the dinner will be applied to the restoration and modernization of the historic church building.

Built in 1890, it was the first permanent brick and stone church structure in Oakland. It boasts the longest redwood beams ever used in a church. The architect was the late Walter Matthews.

The church, which was dedicated to California's preacher-patriot, Thomas Starr King, was the home of the birth of the International Association for Religious Freedom at the turn of the century.

Sen. George Perkins, Dr. Aurelia Henry Reinhardt, Gov.

George Pardee, Joachim Miller, Jack London and other prominent citizens of the state have been associated with the church through the years.

The Rev. Dr. Arnold Crompton is the present pastor. Former pastors include the Rev. Dr. Charles W. Wendte and the Rev. Dr. Clarence Reed.

Unitarians Vote To Sell Church

WORLD MAR 15 1953

The First Unitarian Church will sell its building at 14th and Castro Streets, an Oakland landmark, and seek a location for a new building.

The church membership voted to give its board of trustees authorization to sell the 63-year-old structure and to appoint a special committee to search for a new location.

Also given approval was the proposed federal union of the Unitarian and Universalist denominations.

Elected to the trustee board were William Dye, Thomas Tounsignant, Ellis Weisker and Thomas P. Heckman.

Services to Be Resumed At Church Hit By Flood

SEP - 7 1956

The first worship service since June will be held in the First Unitarian Church, 14th and Castro Streets, Sunday at 11 a.m.

Dr. Arnold Crompton, pastor, will speak on "What Does Life Offer You?"

The historic Unitarian structure was severely damaged by

the rain storms of last winter. Services were suspended to permit restoration work. The sanctuary has been redecorated. The fellowship will be redecorated before Christmas.

This initial service also signals the beginning of the 70th year of the church has ministered in Oakland.

OAKLAND'S First Unitarian Church will celebrate its Diamond Jubilee next month, all of which sent the Knave delving into the archives for early-

TR 5C JAN 28 1962

day pictures and data that might recall memorable tales among the celebrants. It was on Feb. 14, 1887, that the Oakland church was formally organized but it wasn't until Aug. 16, 1890, that the cornerstone was laid for the Unitarians own church edifice at 14th and Castro Streets, an edifice that was finally dedicated on Sept. 6, 1891, and stands in use today with but few changes. If anyone can be called the founder of the First Unitarian Church here it must be the Rev. Charles William Wendte, the congregation's first pastor, although organization of the church began as early as 1869 after an ecclesiastical trial for heresy involving the Rev. Laurentine Hamilton, then pastor of Oakland's First Presbyterian Church. Friends of the Rev. Mr. Hamilton resolved that the able Mr. Hamilton should be continued to be heard and to that end organized the Independent Presbyterian Church. It wasn't long until the name Presbyterian was dropped and by March 15, 1870, Rev. Mr. Hamilton and his followers were in their own church building at 13th and Jefferson Streets. Dr. Hamilton led this group until his sudden death on Easter Sunday of 1882. A short time later this independent church came to an end. Four years later (1886) we find the Rev. Charles W. Wendt settling in Oakland to gather a great many of these liberal churchmen into a Unitarian group. His first service was held Oct. 3, 1886, in the Odd Fellows Hall at Eleventh and Franklin Streets. Organization proceedings were completed on Feb. 14 of the following year. Plans for their own edifice wern't very long coming. Architect W. J. Matthews was hired and designed a Romanesque structure that is still admired.

The Cornerstone

The mid-August day on which the cornerstone was put in place was a sunny and warm Saturday that brought out a goodly crowd. The ladies used their parasols to advantage, and traffic along 14th Street at Castro was blocked by horse-propelled carriages. The few grandstand seats erected for the convenience of spectators were filled by early arrivals long before 1:30 p.m. and everything went off without a hitch. The Rev. Mr. Wendte gave a short address followed by the reading of a poem written by Charles J. Woodbury. Adjoining the church site was the new Oakland Free Library. The picture published here today shows the private homes facing 13th Street at the rear of the church property, and farther down Castro Street is seen the towering building that housed the Pacific Press Publishing House where those

precious Townsend & West atlas-histories of many California counties were published. The next day (Sunday) the Unitarians gathered for their usual services in the Hamilton Church at 13th and Jefferson, the edifice erected by the Rev. Mr. Hamilton for his followers after his break with the Presbyterians. The Unitarian Society found it fitting hold the church as a memorial to the Rev. Hamilton. There may not be many who have personal memories of the early beginnings of this First Unitarian Church in Oakland, but there will be those who can remember sermons by David Starr Jordan, Stanford University's first prexy, and of former President Herbert Hoover, and Aurelia Henry Reinhart of Mills College. They were guest speakers during the ministry of Clarence Reed.

108th Anniversary for Unitarian Church

OCT 1 1977

First Unitarian Church of Oakland, preparing for two months of celebration of its 108th anniversary and the historical landmark status given its 90-year-old building at 14th and Castro streets, will be addressed at 11 a.m. tomorrow, by Minister Arnold Crompton, on "What It Means to be a Unitarian."

It meant something different 33 years ago when he took the post, the clergyman recalled.

"The Ministerial Association said hello but quickly added we would not be welcome," Pastor Crompton said. "The Oakland Council of Churches suggested we apply for membership but then wrote us a letter rejecting

the application."

In the intervening years, relations are much improved, he added.

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Unitarian Church's Memories

OCT - 6 1977

By JOHN DENGEL

Oakland's First Unitarian Church, celebrating its 100th anniversary and the historical landmark status of its 90-year-old house of worship, has been associated through the years with many illustrious names.

Speakers, for example, included the late President Hoover; the modern saint of India, Swami Vivekananda, who spoke here in 1900; and Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose famed quote "if a man build a better mousetrap" was first uttered here.

Local literary figures Edwin Markham, Joaquin Miller and Jack London also were associated with the church.

It had a controversial beginning, resulting from a heresy trial and conviction in the First Presbyterian Church of clergyman Laurentine Hamilton. When he stalked out of what had been his church — the issue is not made clear in the early accounts — a large part of the congregation walked with him and held services in a hall at 12th and Webster, calling themselves the First Independent Presbyterian Church.

The name gave way 11 years later when the congregation voted to affiliate with the American Unitarian Association. The following year the Rev. Mr. Hamilton died while giving his Easter sermon. Mt. Hamilton, near San Jose, on which Lick Observatory is located, was named for the clergyman who had a considerable interest in science. Venerable Hamilton College, in upstate New York, was named for his family.

Under a successor, the Rev. Charles Wendte, secretary after 1886 for the West Coast branch of the American Unitarian Association, the membership decided to construct their present building at 14th and Castro streets, the first Romanesque church built in California. Architect Percy Matthews decided to use all California materials. In addition to stone and brick he installed redwood spans which at that time were the longest then in use.

Arnold Crompton, minister of

the church the past 33 years, recalled in last Sunday's sermon that the Oakland Council of Churches refused the denomination membership and the Oakland Ministerial Association also took a discriminatory attitude "on the grounds of doctrine." Time however has healed the breaches.

Pastor Crompton, who is writing his second volume on the history of the Unitarians in the West — his first covered the days from the Gold Rush to 1910 — will talk Oct. 13 on the literary figures. Edwin Markham, later editor of the San Francisco Examiner, was an Oakland school principal when he published his famed poem, "The Man With the Hoe." A later work perhaps better known was: "He drew a circle which shut me out, heretic, rebel, a thing to flout; but love and I had the wit to win, we drew a circle that took him in." Markham, who grew up in Suisun, started his search for the world of knowledge with a horse named Aristotle.

Another church regular was Joaquin Miller, whose real first name had been Cincinnatus Heine, but who took the name of the legendary "good bandit," Joaquin Murietta, though there were some who disputed that goodness. He was the first to plead the cause of the Western Indians, lived with the Modocs, and was given a "pleasant little valley" later called Squaw Valley.

Jack London's connection with the church is more remote. The membership card of his first wife, Beth, a Sunday school teacher, remains in the church files.

The mousetrap quotation, source of considerable literary controversy, was made by Emerson in an 1871 lecture. It was first printed in "Borrowings," an anthology gathered by the ladies guild to raise funds. Emerson frequently expounded on the theme that the world would discover the path to any able craftsman or professional but this apparently was his first mention of a mousetrap builder.

Church

OCT 22 1977

11/11

Historic First Unitarian

Church of Oakland is having a United Nations service tomorrow as part of its 108th anniversary celebrations planned through next month.

The following Sunday, the church will commemorate the triple historical landmark status given its 90-year-old building at 14th and Castro streets.

The United Nations service is honoring the church's prestigious use when the U.N. was organized at the end of World War II. During the 1945 U.N. meetings in San Francisco, the Starr King Room in the Oakland church was frequently used by delegates for committee meetings.

This was arranged by a member of the church, Aurelia Henry Reinhardt, former president of Mills College and past moderator of the American Unitarian Association.

Theme for the 11 a.m. service will be "Peace and Disarmament." The speaker will be church member Elizabeth Gamboni, past president of the Alameda County Chapter of the United Nations Association. Arnold Crompton, pastor of the church for the past 33 years, will speak on "Human Rights — Today's Religious Frontier."

The landmark celebration Oct. 30 will begin with an 11 a.m. church service. There will be a reception and open house at 2 p.m. followed by a dedication program at 3:15 p.m. Many religious, government and community dignitaries are expected to participate in the ceremonies honoring the church's triple landmark status.

First Unitarian Church was designated a City of Oakland landmark in 1975, a state landmark last year, and a National Register landmark earlier this year.

Constructed in 1890, the

church is well-known for its tower, chapel, open-ended courtyard, and many stained glass

windows. Materials used in construction are all native Californian. The church stands today

with the original exterior, although interior alterations have been extensive.

Unitarian Church Tribute Is Paid

OCT 31 1977

A host of religious, community and government dignitaries paid tribute yesterday to the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, 685 14th St., on the occasion commemorating its triple landmark status.

Plaques recognizing the 90-year-old church as an official city, state and U.S. historical landmark were presented by Vice Mayor John Sutter; Kathryn Kaiser, vice chairman, state Historical Resources Commission, and Bruce Kilgore, associate regional director, U.S. Department of the Interior.

In a neighborhood struggling against deterioration, the church and the block on which it stands have been designated as historical landmarks by the city of Oakland. The church will be the northwest corner of the City Center complex.

Known for its beautiful stained glass windows, elaborate woodwork and open-ended courtyard, the church faced demolition as the neighborhood began to decline.

In his first week as pastor in the 1940s, the Rev. Arnold Crompton recalled the building was a shambles.

"The floor had collapsed in the far wing, the ivy fell off the window and blocked Castro Street, the eastern Ivy was set



REV. ARNOLD CROMPTON
'Building was a shambles'

on fire by a cigarette butt, someone threw a brick through a stained glass window, a malfunctioning furnace sent smoke into the congregation and the neighborhood boys played baseball in Wendte Hall," the pastor recalled.

He and the congregation attempted to sell the church for years, fixing it up for prospective buyers, but it did not sell.

The congregation was divided in 1954, with half moving to the Starr King Unitarian Fellowship in Hayward. The Oakland congregation floundered into the early 60s, Crompton said, pondering its purpose in the community.

When President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, the building was filled day and night for four days, he said, "and from that point on, we knew we had a destiny downtown."

On hand at yesterday's dedication ceremonies were city council members, Ruth Love, superintendent of Oakland Public Schools; U.C. Berkeley Vice Chancellor Ira M. Heyman; G. Gordon Strong, Publisher of The Tribune; Dale O'Dell, City Center coordinator; David Hoard, director of the Oakland Community Development Department; William Penn Mott Jr., former director of the state Parks and Recreation Department; Emelyn Jewett, president, Oakland Tribune, Inc.; members of the Oakland Landmark Advisory Board, and representatives from City Center businesses.

State Sen. Nicholas Petris delivered concluding remarks to the congregation, and read congratulatory telegrams from U.S. Sen. S.I. Hayakawa, Rep. Fortney H. (Pete) Stark and Rep. Ronald Dellums.

Three sites named city landmarks

FEB 19 1978

Three historic Oakland structures — the first Unitarian Church, the Pardee mansion, and the Alfred H. Cohen home — are now official city landmarks.

They received plaques in ceremonies beneath the stained-glass windows of the 90-year-old Romanesque church building at the 14th and Castro streets corner of the City Center.

Lewis Koue, chairman of the Oakland Landmarks Preservation Board, introduced representatives of the California Heritage Council in a room still associated with personages such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Edwin Markham and Joaquin Miller.

Helen Pardee, also on behalf of her sister Madeline, received the plaque for the stately white Pardee residence at 672 11th St. Built in 1868 by Enoch H. Pardee, later mayor of Oakland, it also was home to his son, George, also a mayor and governor as well.

Emelita Cohen accepted the plaque for the Alfred H. Cohen residence constructed in 1883 at 1440 29th Ave. in the block alongside East 14th Street. One gift to the family, Miss Cohen recalled later, was "one great redwood log" which was custom-carved into tall doors and cut into pieces to line dark, handsome hallways.

The structure has high ceilings, elaborate paneling, recessed mahogany cabinetry and a large double-walled pantry. A rug brought to the house from Europe was so long it had to be transported by two railroad freight cars.

Helen Hill, president of the Unitarian Church trustees, received the plaque for that building, whose sanctuary ceiling has redwood spans that were the longest in use at the time they were first built, and the first to be laminated.

The structure itself, Pastor Arnold Crompton said, was built on pylons and reportedly 'simply floated out the 1906 earthquake like Frank Lloyd Wright's old Imperial Hotel in Japan did in the quakes there.'

The clergyman said church records support the contention that New Englander Emerson's famed quote "if a man build a better mousetrap" was first uttered there.

Oakland Hills fire victim still able to help out others

By Janet Byron
Tribune staff writer

ON OCT. 20, Diana Cushing's home went up in flames along with the offices of Arete Relief Organization, one of the sponsors of yesterday's holiday celebration at Oakland's First Unitarian Church.

Nonetheless, Cushing and her family were on hand to help distribute hundreds of holiday meals to local low-income and homeless families.

"Personally, I don't feel as defeated," said Cushing, who was out of town with her baby and husband when the devastating firestorm swept through the Oakland Hills. "We're still able to serve the community."

Rows of volunteers — members of Arete, Thanks for Giving, and the Center for Urban Living — spent the afternoon dishing out heaping plates of turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, vegetables and homemade desserts.

The celebration also included live music, and free clothing, toys and legal advice.

Cushing was quick to point out that the event was the work of dozens of volunteers. "It takes a whole community to make it happen," she said.

The event originated five years ago in Hollywood, where thousands of holiday meals have been served by Thanks for Giving, spokeswoman Mary Joan Schwab explained. Several members of the group moved to the Bay Area this year and organized their first annual Bay Area event.

"Homelessness and poverty are overwhelming, when you think about it," Schwab said. "We got together and asked what we could do to make a party for people so they could celebrate."

Seven nights a week, the church's Wendte Hall shelters 35 people with nowhere else to sleep. Yesterday, the cots were stowed to the side to make room for long rows of tables festooned with large pine cones.



Diana Cushing holds aloft her son, Joshua, who is 19 months old.

'Homelessness and poverty are overwhelming, when you think about it.'

— Mary Joan Schwab,
Thanks for Giving spokeswoman

tooned with large pine cones.

Wayne Kelly, an unemployed welder who lives nearby at the Sutter Hotel with his wife and five children, said he was unable to prepare a Thanksgiving meal this year because the hotel has no cooking facilities.

Before landing at the hotel, Kelly, 32, spent a year living and eating in shelters around the city. "It's great that they have those places, otherwise people would starve," Kelly said, as he prepared to enjoy a heaping plate of hot, delicious food.



Tom Howard pours glasses of juice for Ann Riskin

First Unitarian recovers — again

By Steven LaVoie
Tribune librarian

SUN OCT 18 1992

The third anniversary of the Loma Prieta earthquake of Oct. 17, 1989, finds central Oakland still riddled with wreckage from that frightening tremor.

One badly damaged local landmark — the First Unitarian Church of Oakland — recovered quickly to continue a tradition of relief that began after the same building was nearly destroyed.

The great earthquake of 1906 nearly toppled the venerable Romanesque structure at 14th and Castro streets.

Yet, as they would do again in 1989, church members propped up its walls and went to work serving victims of the disaster.

When those needs were met, repairs to the structure were completed quickly.

Its resilience reflects the fortitude of the congregation it houses.

Unitarianism, with origins in Transylvania during the Renaissance, was founded on principles of religious liberty and tolerance of all faiths. That struggle brought Unitarianism to Oakland.

One of California's legendary pastors, Larentine Hamilton, came to the East Bay in 1864 to head the local Presbyterian Church. His sermons soon attracted many of the leading figures of the West, including Henry Durant, himself a clergyman and the first president of the University of California, and Oscar L. Shafter, a state Supreme Court justice. Both Durant and Shafter have East Bay streets named for them.

During the Easter season in 1868, Hamilton preached a series of sermons that outraged the Presbytery.

He contended that "the Grace of Repentance and Forgiveness may be extended to some souls after death."

Hamilton, for whom Mt. Hamilton in Santa

Clara County is named, was found guilty of heresy at a trial before the Synod held at his church on Feb. 11, 1869.

When the Synod announced its decision, church members rose from their pews and followed Hamilton out of the church — then at 13th Street and Broadway — never to return.

Instead, they formed the Society of the First Independent Presbyterian Church of Oakland and adopted a doctrine based on religious freedom.

In 1881, the new church joined the Unitarians, who shared Hamilton's universalist ideas. On Easter 1882, Hamilton collapsed during a sermon and died. His congregation soon collapsed as well.

Another major Unitarian figure, Charles Wendte, restored Hamilton's church in 1886. Before long, plans were in place to build the church that still stands today — despite the destruction of two earthquakes.

The church building, designed by Walter J. Mathews, was dedicated in 1891 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Inside, a long tradition of community service continues.

Perhaps because of its own bad luck in disasters, the church has been a haven for the unfortunate throughout its history.

After the 1906 earthquake, during a major flu epidemic in 1918, throughout the Depression and again after the 1989 earthquake and the 1991 fire, Oakland Unitarians opened their church to the needy.

Today, the church serves as a shelter for the homeless.

The bicentennial of American Universalism will be celebrated through February 1993.

Steven LaVoie's Time Capsule column looks back every Sunday on the East Bay's past. Have a column idea? Please call him at 510-645-2745, or write to the Oakland Tribune, P.O. Box 24424, Oakland 94623.

UNESCO — time for U.S. to rejoin?

TUE MAY 16 1985

THE United States pulled out of UNESCO in 1985, in disgust at the way the United Nations agency was being run, and its apparent bias against the West and against Western definitions of a free press. In doing so, we ran out on an international organization with roots in the East Bay and the lofty goal of creating world peace through science, education and the force of public opinion.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization got its start at the Unitarian Church at 13th and Castro streets in Oakland. The founders sought peace and quiet away from the frantic atmosphere in San Francisco, where the main work of creating the United Nations was proceeding in a pressure-cooker atmosphere.

Oakland was an appropriate place for such a start, since educators from Mills College and other Bay Area institutions had been pushing for some sort of international office of education in the new world body. From its start, UNESCO has enjoyed heavy participation from educators, especially women, and many Bay Area residents have been involved with it at local, national and international levels.

The Bay Area's celebration this year of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the

United Nations charter in San Francisco provides an appropriate framework for a look back at UNESCO and consideration of whether the U.S. should rejoin.

Early concerns of UNESCO centered around education, mass communications, press freedom and literacy. War-ravaged countries were begging for textbooks and school supplies, radio technology was showing promise for bringing nations closer together, and UNESCO was there to coordinate international efforts to clear up misunderstandings before they led to violence.

Meanwhile, McCarthyism was taking hold across America. The American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars took positions against UNESCO and the United Nations in general. A Fresno Democrat in the state Senate's Committee on Un-American Activities asked for an investigation of Communists in UNESCO (and in labor unions). And Senator Henry Cabot Lodge claimed UNESCO had eight American employees "of doubtful loyalty."

Call for withdrawal

In 1955, an American Legion committee reported that after a thorough investigation, it had given UNESCO a clean bill of health, stating that it was not atheistic, communistic, subversive or in favor of world government. But the American Legion's national body rejected the report and called on Congress to take the U.S. out of the agency.

The American Legion got its wish, but not until 1985. By then, UNESCO had evolved a massive bureaucracy under less-than-stellar leadership, and proposals to license and regiment journalists put it solidly outside its

early commitment to the free exchange of information and ideas. But the agency has been reformed, and it is now thoroughly in support of a free press, to the extent of helping train writers in other countries in the

In 1948, UNESCO was talking about concepts that later became cornerstones of America's civil rights movement.

ways of American investigative journalism.

Priorities today are more in the tradition of human rights and forward-looking policies: education for girls on a level of that offered to boys, career options for women, and development of higher education for all; management of ecosystems to preserve the environment in concert with human needs; international exchange of scientific information; exploration of ethical questions associated with the human genome project; development of public libraries; and protection of historic sites and monuments.

A worldwide peace

Early participants expressed the hope that sharing information through new technology and exchanging students and scientists would lead to a worldwide consensus of opinion that would keep the peace.

As UNESCO organized its efforts and broadened its interests, it provided a forum for ideas that were controversial in their time but gradually gained respect. For example, a UNESCO conference in San Francisco in May, 1948 heard these revolutionary suggestions to end tensions between whites and minorities:

- Get rid of covenants that prevented houses from being sold to non-whites.
- Provide low-cost, integrated housing.
- Admit minorities on an equal basis in labor unions and community organizations.
- Start treating all Americans the same, rather than predicated treatment on skin color.

Imagine how different American society would be today if these ideas had taken hold in 1948, instead of being introduced by force of law slowly and grudgingly over the next decades.

That same year, a regional conference of high school students was held at Stanford, and educators were urged to incorporate UNESCO's aims of peace through cultural understanding in all classrooms.

Another revolutionary idea came along in 1950: a UNESCO report announced that scientific investigation had found no basis for the idea that children of mixed-race marriages ("human hybrids") were inferior. "Race discrimination has no scientific foundation in biological fact," the report announced.

The United States is now considering rejoining the organization. Indeed, it is almost true to say we have never really left. We recently provided a \$300,000 grant to UNESCO to help rebuild the Haitian educational system from the ground up, from providing school buildings and international specialists on curriculum to introducing the concept of human rights into the classroom.

Programs still funded

UNESCO has just begun funding a program at Columbia University to study how nations can increase industrial productivity without destroying the environment — one of the hottest topics around today — and another program at Johns Hopkins on youth and health issues in Africa, with emphasis on AIDS. The UNESCO-sponsored International Institute for Theoretical and Applied Physics is headquartered at Iowa State University in Ames.

UNESCO works with the Simon Wiesenthal Institute in Los Angeles to encourage tolerance and decrease racism all over the globe. And UNESCO is among several agencies behind the International Reading Association in Delaware, with its global push for education, especially for girls and women.

Whether Congress would come up with any money to pay America's share, however, is another matter. President Clinton had planned to rejoin this year, but after the November election, he removed from his proposed budget the \$65 million he had earmarked for dues. With Republican hostility to the United Nations in general, rejoining UNESCO might have to wait. We hope it doesn't wait too long.